

TRANSIT STRIKE – HOW DOES IT AFFECT JOB SEARCHING? – Part II

This week we will discuss the fact that businesses, especially in downtown Vancouver are reporting dramatic drops in business as a result of the BC transit strike. We will also review the effects that the strike has on summer jobs and how motivation plays an impact in overcoming the transit barrier.

Many businesses are dependent on walk-by traffic, and the summer months are sometimes the “*make it or break it*” times. Service industries such as lawyers and travel agents have been largely unaffected, but retailers are experiencing a massive impact. Even very high-end retailers, like large music stores, are affected, as well as small corner shops. The fact remains that there are fewer people on the streets.

In recent survey by the Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association up to 85% of its members reporting a dramatic loss in business, with financial losses averaging more than 40%. When you think that even small businesses run at a gross of \$150,000 and up, 40% is equal to \$60,000; these losses can result in serious financial problems. Therefore our transit strike impacts our economy in so many ways. People’s lives are affected, and many businesses have laid off workers or reduced shifts.

Job seekers now face transportation and economic problems and must think of ways to overcome them. By deciding to solve them shows that your “*heart*” is focused and committed to finding a job. When you are motivated success becomes just a matter of time and applying creative solutions to problems.

Last week I gave practical solutions to the transportation problems. But practical solutions are not enough. People know that finding a job is important. Their motivation may come from having bills to pay, or a strong work ethic, but sometimes that is not enough to weather tough times like these. Your passion to succeed transforms obstacles like the transit strike into opportunities to prove your determination, creativity, and courage to overcome life’s difficulties.

This sounds a little preachy, but it is real, and is a struggle that extends far beyond the scope of job searching. Problems like these are increasingly focused on making us more flexible and resilient to change and transitions.

Chinese philosophers also see reality as a process of continual flow and change. In the Chinese view, then, there seem to be two kinds of activity – activity in harmony with nature and activity against the natural flow of things. The idea of passivity, the complete absence of any action, is not entertained.

In challenging circumstances victims are the ones who frequently reinforce their helplessness by engaging in passive action. In the case of job searching this behaviour results in a “*negative mentality*”.

Even though you can expect to have negative emotions periodically during a long job search, a "*positive mental attitude*" is essential in bringing the job search process to a satisfactory conclusion.

This means today's job seeker must be smarter, more flexible and more persistent than years ago. Belief in your ability to overcome these miserable circumstances and see new possibilities is vital. It is a tough climb, but for those willing and able to make it, it works wonders.

Employers are particularly aware of those "*self-defeating*" postures that people adopt. People that appear uncooperative, prickly, undependable, and lack of initiative are primarily as a result of attitude. Having seen and experienced plenty of "*my life is a mess but it's not my fault*" victim playing I have little sympathy for people who have adopted postures that dramatise their indignant sense of exclusion and perpetuate their marginalization from society. For some job seekers this type of attitude results in passivity, for others it is a blaming mentality, and for many it is the strut of "*attitude*" that society somehow "*owes*" them something.

What about lack of job skills which according to conventional wisdom is the primary roadblock to employment?

Few employers cite a lack of job skills as a major problem, however many comment on the problems with stereotypical "*negative*" posturing and self-defeating attitudes.

Understand that you have an alternative to taking a passive role in job searching during this transit strike. Using this "*challenge*" as an opportunity to learn and grow is true measure of success. All I can say is "*roll up your sleeves*" and get down to work.